Session 18 Jesus’ Public Confession of His Deity (Jn. 7-10)

1. introduction
   1. In this passage, Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Dedication in autumn and winter of AD 29 (Jn. 7-10), on His third visit to Jerusalem. In Jesus, we see the fulfillment of what the Feast of Tabernacles was a shadow (Jn. 7). Hostility continued to grow against Him (Jn. 7:19, 30, 32, 44; 8:59; 10:39) as He openly declared His deity (Jn. 8). He revealed Himself as the light of the world (Jn. 8-9) and the good shepherd, then declared His deity (Jn. 10).

1After these things [the events of John 6] Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. 2Now the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. (Jn. 7:1-2)

* 1. The Feast of Tabernacles celebrated the harvest and commemorated Israel’s journey for 40 years in the wilderness (Lev. 23:33-43). They built temporary shelters out of branches and leaves and lived in them for the week to remember how their forefathers lived in the wilderness—thus the name the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles (Lev. 23:42). According to Josephus, this feast was the most popular of the three feasts that Israel was required to attend (Josephus, 8:4:1).

42You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths…   
(Lev. 23:42)

* 1. Two main themes associated with this feast are water and light—Jesus made reference to the water-drawing and lamp-lighting rituals (Jn. 7:37-39; 8:12). The feast ran for seven days (in September-October), ending with a celebratory gathering on the eighth day, 22 Tishri (Lev. 23:36).

1. Jesus went to Jerusalem (Jn. 7:2-44)
   1. Jesus’ brothers urged Him to go to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles to gain a larger following (Jn. 7:2-10). Jesus responded by explaining it was not the Father’s perfect timing for Him to go yet. They could go to the feast at any time because they were not on a divinely-ordered schedule. Jesus left for Jerusalem sometime after His brothers so to avoid drawing attention to Himself before the right time. The authorities in Jerusalem were seeking to arrest Him (Jn. 7:1).

2Now the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. 3His brothers therefore said to Him, “Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing…” 5For even His brothers did not believe in Him. 6Then Jesus said to them, “My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready…8I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come.” 9…He remained in Galilee. 10But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. (Jn. 7:2-10)

* 1. Many people in the city were debating about whether Jesus was a good or evil man (Jn. 7:11-12).

11Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, “Where is He?” 12And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, “He is good”; others said,   
“No, on the contrary, He deceives the people.” (Jn. 7:11-12)

* 1. In the middle of the seven-day feast, Jesus taught openly in the temple. He taught that His knowledge about God came directly from God, not from receiving formal training. The way the rabbis commonly settled theological issues was by debating each other. But Jesus taught that the key to understanding if He was from God was related to their willingness to obey God.

14Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. 15And the Jews marveled, saying, “How does this Man know letters, having never studied?” 16Jesus answered them and said, “My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. 17If anyone wills to do His will,   
he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God…Why do you seek to kill Me?” 20The people answered and said, “You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?” (Jn. 7:14-20)

* 1. Jesus taught on the activity of the Spirit (Jn. 7:37-44). The ritual with the water spoke of messianic blessings. On each of the mornings of the feast the high priest led a procession taking water from the Pool of Siloam to the temple courtyard. The water was poured out at the morning sacrifice, representing God’s provision of water flowing from the rock in the wilderness, the promise of the Spirit, and blessing of rain under Messiah. Jesus claimed to be the fulfillment of what the feast of Tabernacles spoke—pointing to Himself to the rock in the wilderness (1 Cor. 10:4).

37On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus…cried out, saying, 38“…He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” 39But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive… (Jn. 7:37-39)

4They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. (1 Cor. 10:4)

1. the woman caught in adultery (Jn. 8:1-11)
   1. Jesus showed mercy to the woman caught in adultery (Jn. 8:1-11).

2…He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him…3Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, 4they said to Him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. 5Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?” 6This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger…7He raised Himself up and said to them, “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.” 8And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one…Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 10…He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?” 11She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.” (Jn. 8:2-11)

* 1. Jesus mentioned passages in the law of Moses that required two witnesses of the sin to cast the first stone (Deut. 17:7). Jesus, in saying “he who is without sin,” meant the sin of adultery. He did not imply that the accusers needed to be sinless, but innocent of the particular sin of the accused.
  2. Jesus took the place of her advocate or defense attorney (1 Jn. 2:1). There was not enough evidence according to the law to condemn her. Jesus was not an eyewitness and could not legally accuse her, so He let her go. Jesus was not saying it was okay in the New Testament to commit adultery.

1. Jesus, the Light of the world— the eternal God (Jn. 8:12-59)
   1. Jesus’ *light of the world* message spoken in the temple (Jn. 8:12-59): Isaiah predicted that Messiah would be a light to the nations (Isa. 49:6; Isa. 60:1-3). At the Feast of Tabernacles, priests lit three large torches on the lampstand in the temple precincts. People celebrated with dancing and song.

12Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” 14“… My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going…15You judge according to the flesh…” (Jn. 8:12-15)

* 1. The light of Jesus will illuminate the New Jerusalem during the millennial kingdom (Rev. 21:23).

23The city had no need of the sun…for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.   
(Rev 21:23)

* 1. Jesus taught about His coming from heaven and their need to believe in Him (Jn. 8:21-30).

23He said…, “You are from beneath; I am from above…24if you do not believe that I am He,   
you will die in your sins.” 25Then they said to Him, “Who are You?” …28Then Jesus said to them, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He…” (Jn. 8:23-28)

* 1. ***I am***: Jesus was declaring that He is the God who revealed Himself to Moses as “I am” or as the One who is eternally self-existent (Ex. 3:13-15; Isa. 41:4; 43:10, 13, 25; 46:4; 48:12).
  2. ***Lift up***: Jesus refers to His crucifixion as the way to His glorification (Jn. 3:14; 12:23). After His crucifixion, the Father exalted Him, sending the Spirit, and many then believed in Him (Acts 2-4).
  3. Jesus elaborated on His deity and on His relationship to the Father (Jn. 8:31-59). He continued to teach in the temple. The Jews insisted that they were children of Abraham and that God was their Father. Jesus insisted that their father was the devil who wanted to kill Jesus

39Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham. 40But now you seek to kill Me…41They said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.” 42Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me…  
43Why do you not understand My speech? Because you…44are of your father the devil…”   
(Jn. 8:39-43)

* 1. The hostility of the authorities towards Jesus (Jn. 8:47-59): Jesus declared that their father was the devil; they answered by saying that Jesus was demon possessed (Jn. 7:20; 8:52; 10:20).

48Then the Jews answered and said to Him, “Do we not say rightly that You…have a demon?” 49Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father…51if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.” 52Then the Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead…and You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.’ 53Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead?”…57The Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” 58Jesus said to them, “…before Abraham was, I AM.” 59Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple… (Jn. 8:48-59)

1. Jesus healed a Blind man (Jn. 9:1-41)
   1. On the Sabbath while in Jerusalem, Jesus healed a man who was born blind (Jn. 9:1-41). The theme of Jesus as the Light of the World is here elaborated further from John 8:12. When the Light of Jesus shines forth, people receive physical and/or spiritual sight. There are more testimonies in the four gospels of Jesus healing blindness than any other category of healing (Mt. 9:27-31; 12:22-23; 15:30-31; 21:14; Mk. 8:22-26; 10:46-52; Lk. 7:21-22).

1Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. 2And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” 3Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him… 5I am the light of the world.” 6…He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. 7And He said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” … So he went and washed, and came back seeing… (Jn. 9:1-7)

* 1. Some assume that there is always a cause-and-effect relationship between a person’s sickness and their sin. Sin lies behind all the pain and evil in our fallen world, but the connection between it and an individual’s sin and failure is not always immediate, observable, or even existent. God permitted this man’s blindness to display His miracle-working power and compassion in his life.
  2. The Pharisees questioned the man who was healed (Jn. 9:13-23). His parents were afraid of being excommunicated from their synagogue.

17They said to the blind man again, “What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.” 18But the Jews did not believe…that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. 19And they asked them, saying, “Is this your son…? How then does he now see?” 20His parents answered them…“We know that…he was born blind; 21but by what means he now sees we do not know…He is of age; ask him…” 22His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue.   
(Jn. 9:17-22)

* 1. Jesus found the previously-blind man after the Pharisees excommunicated him (Jn. 9:35-41).

35Jesus heard that they had cast him out; when He had found him, He said to him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” 36He answered and said, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?” 37And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.” 38Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him. 39And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.” 40Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, “Are we blind also?” 41Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.” (Jn. 9:35-41)

* 1. Jesus came to save people, but in doing so He passed judgment on those who refuse His kindness (Jn. 3:17-21, 36; 12:47). Jesus was referring to Isaiah 6:10. He exposed the spiritual blindness of some so they might see their need and humble themselves by turning to Jesus to receive spiritual sight. But manifestations of His power cause those who rebel against Him to become more hardened in their heart. The light of Jesus causes some to see, while it hardens and blinds other.

1. Jesus is the door and the good shepherd—The God-man (Jn. 10:1-42)
   1. Jesus declared that He was the Door and the Good Shepherd of His people (Jn. 10:1-21). The previously-blind man had just been excommunicated from the synagogue (Jn. 9:34) and received into Jesus’ sheepfold. Jesus, as the Good Shepherd, found him and brought him into the true fold. John 10 continues in the theme of John 9, when Jesus brought the man He healed into God’s family.

1“Most assuredly…he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door…is a thief and a robber. 2But he who enters by the door is the shepherd…3To him the doorkeeper opens…and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out…4the sheep follow him, for they know his voice…” 6Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them. (Jn. 10:1-6)

* 1. Jesus used the illustration of “good shepherd” to contrast Himself with the bad shepherds who were misleading Israel. There were many Old Testament warnings to Israel’s leaders to avoid being false shepherds (Jer. 23:1-4; 25:32-38; Ezek. 34). The Lord was Israel’s true shepherd (Ps. 23:1; 80:1).
  2. Jesus spoke of sheep in a “fold” or sheep pen with a fence and walls and only one door. The thieves and robbers referred to the religious authorities in Jerusalem who led the people for selfish gain. The “doorkeeper” spoke of the man who was responsible to protect the sheep from their enemies. They were leaders like Moses, David, the godly kings, and the Old Testament prophets.
  3. Jesus explained His illustration (Jn. 10:7-18). Jesus is the Door into the kingdom of God (Jn. 10:7; 14:6). The thieves and robbers speak of wicked leaders (Jn. 10:1) over God’s people who are merely “hired” hands. They serve the sheep with an eye on enriching their position and for what they can get out of it. A hireling always flees when trouble and danger come. False shepherds are motivated by Satan who comes to kill, steal, and destroy the life of God’s people (Jn. 10:10).

7Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep…10The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. 11“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. 12But a hireling…sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep…13The hireling flees because…he does not care about the sheep…15I lay down My life for the sheep. 16And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd. 17“Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life…18No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again”…30I and My Father are one.” (Jn. 10:7-18, 30)

* 1. ***Power to take it up again***: The three Persons of the Trinity are each fully involved with every work of God—creation, the incarnation, healing miracles, the atonement, the resurrection (Jn. 10:18).
     1. The three persons are each fully involved with every work of God—creation, the incarnation, healing miracles, the atonement, the resurrection (Jn. 10:18), etc.
     2. Jesus and the Father are one in their action—in context here it is in keeping His sheep safe. There is one God who forever dwells in three distinct Persons who are coequal as divine persons. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit each fully possess all of God’s attributes. Each person is different from the others in function and authority in their relationship and work. Each person’s work is unified, fully engaged with, and interdependent on the others’ work.
  2. Jesus publicly declared in Jerusalem that He was Messiah and was God (Jn. 10:22-30).

22Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. 23And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon’s porch. 24Then the Jews…said to Him, “How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.” 25Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me…27My sheep hear My voice…and they follow Me. 28And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29My Father, who has given them to Me…and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand. 30I and My Father are one.” (Jn. 10:22-30)

* + 1. The Feast of Dedication is known as Hanukkah. To prove that none can snatch His sheep out of His hand (Jn. 10:29), Jesus spoke of the Father’s involvement in protecting the sheep.
    2. They asked Jesus for a “plain” statement about His identity.
    3. Declaring His oneness with the Father (Jn. 10:30) was the high point in His teaching. Jesus is much more than a mere man—He is the God-Man who is fully God and fully Man.
  1. The Jews wanted to stone Jesus for declaring that He was God’s Son (Jn. 10:31-39).

31Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him…33saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.” 34Jesus answered, “…37If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 38but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know…that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.” 39Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand. (Jn. 10:31-39)

* 1. Jesus left Jerusalem as the result of the increased hostility against Him (Jn. 10:40-42). Jesus went to Perea, on the east side of the Jordan River, where the Jewish rulers had no authority to pursue Him.

40And He went away again beyond the Jordan [Perea]…and there He stayed. 41Then many came to Him and said, “John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true.” 42And many believed in Him there. (Jn. 10:40-42)

* 1. Many people in Perea believed in Jesus— I assume Jesus declared His deity to them as He did in Jerusalem. They understood that Jesus fulfilled what John the Baptist had taught about Him.